

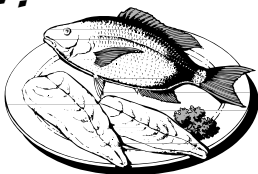
BALTIMORE

MOMS' & KIDS' GUIDE TO EATING FISH

You may have seen news reports stating that fish contain high levels of mercury, PCBs, and other toxic substances. Many people want to know if eating fish is dangerous to their health. The Baltimore City Health Department has put out this flyer so that you'll have the best information available about eating fish.

ARE FISH SAFE TO EAT?

Yes, but certain people should take some precautions and set some limits on what and how much they eat.



In general, fish and shellfish are an important part of a healthy diet. They contain high quality protein and other essential nutrients, are low in saturated fat, and contain the "good" fatty acids. They're good for your heart and overall health.

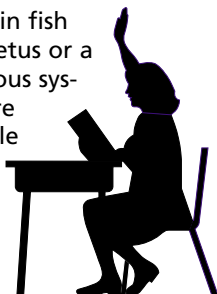


WHO NEEDS TO BE CAREFUL ABOUT EATING FISH?

Young children under age 6, pregnant women, nursing mothers, and women who are of child-bearing age.

WHY THEM?

Because the contaminants found in fish may hurt the development of a fetus or a young child, especially their nervous systems. Their bodies may grow more slowly and they could have trouble learning. The danger is similar to lead poisoning.



WHAT ABOUT EVERYBODY ELSE?

Men and older women do not have to be as picky! All people, though, should know the kinds of fish that are safer to eat.

WHAT ARE THE DO'S AND DON'TS?

1. **Don't** stop eating all fish. Overall, they are a cheap, good source of protein with many health benefits.

2. **Do** eat smaller fish and a variety of fish. You can have up to 2 average meals

(12 ounces total, or the equivalent of two decks of playing cards) per week of these kinds of fish: shrimp, canned light tuna (but not albacore), haddock, pollock, tilapia, halibut, and snapper.



The serving size for young children is smaller (1 to 3 ounces).

3. **Don't** eat swordfish, king mackerel, tilefish, or shark.

4. **Do** eat crab -- but not the mustard.

WHAT IF I HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

If you are worried about your or your child's health, contact your doctor or health clinic.

Look to our web site for more information:

Baltimore City Health Department

www.baltimorecity.gov/government/health

The Maryland Department of the Environment has information about specific types of fish and the local waterways at their web site:

www.mde.state.md.us/CitizensInfoCenter/Health/fish_advisories/index.asp (Note: be sure to type in an underline "_" between "fish" and "advisories"!)

You may also call MDE with a specific question at (410) 537-3906.



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